



# SPAWN

HINE

MAYHEW

TROY

GUNSLINGER SPAWN: PART 1

ISSUE 174 DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN.COM

Capullo



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IMAGE COMICS PRESENT

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#### PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN:

Al Simmons was a hit man for the US government until a treacherous assassin ended his life. At the moment of death, Al was offered a deal by the demon Malebolgia and returned to Earth as Spawn, a creature with supernatural powers born in Hell.

As Armageddon consumed the world, Spawn turned against his masters, destroying all life on Earth. While God and Satan continue their endless conflict in a parallel universe, Spawn has re-created the world and resurrected the human race, in what has become known as the White Light. The portals to Heaven and Hell are closed, leaving humanity free from the influence of angels and demons.

After a reunion with his brother, Richard, Al's long-buried memories are beginning to resurface. It seems that the mysterious Mammon has been manipulating Al Simmons since he was a child. When he returns to his parents' home, Al's father tells him that Mammon's influence stretches back even further. He gives Al the journal of his great grandfather, Henry Simmons, a journal that carries a dire warning for future generations...

#### Buffalo Soldiers:

During the American Civil War, almost 180,000 African-Americans fought on the side of the Union. Over 30,000 of them died. IN July 1866, to recognize their service, an act of Congress authorized the formation of 2 calvary regments and 4 infantry regiments to be drawn from the black population. These regiments became popularly konw as "Buffalo Soldiers". In spite of their distinguished service and frequent commendations for bravery, the Buffalo Soldiers were often victims of racism within the Army itself and from the civilian population they served.

The newly recruited soldiers were educated by chaplains to read and write - and education they may not have had in civilian life. Henry Simmons, the character featured in this story, is one of the success stories of the 'colored' regiments. An intelligent, educated man who served loyally and well, and rose to the rank of Sergeant. He might have progressed further if not for his involvement in the fracas at Bob Powell's saloon in early 1881. The event described here is loosely based on an actual incident when members of the 10th Calvary, based at Fort Concho in Texas, reacted to the murder of a fellow soldier by a civilian in the nearby town of San Angelo.

This story takes place in the immediate aftermath, as Henry Simmons rides into the mountains of Colorado looking for refuge from the harsh winter snows.

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FEBRUARY 1881. THE HILLS WEST OF COLORADO SPRINGS.

THAT WAS ONE HELL OF A WINTER. ONLY A DAMNED FOOL OR A DESPERATE MAN WOULD BE RIDING OUT ALONE IN A BLIZZARD LIKE THAT.

I GUESS I WAS BOTH.

I THANKED GOD FOR MY BUFFALO HIDE COAT. I GOT IT FROM A PRIVATE IN THE 9th WHO TOOK IT AS SPOILS OF WAR FROM THE COMANCHES DURING THE STAKED PLAINS UPRISING IN '74.

A BUFFALO COAT FOR A BUFFALO SOLDIER.

THE NUMBING COLD AND THE FATIGUE WORKED THEIR EFFECT ON ME AND I FELL INTO A KIND OF STUPOR. IN THAT WHIRLING KALEIDOSCOPE OF WHITE, I BEGAN TO SEE IMAGES FORMING.

LIKE A DROWNING MAN, MY LIFE PASSED BEFORE MY EYES.

THERE I WAS, PROUD AS A PEACOCK, PARADING WITH MY COMRADES AT FORT LEAVENWORTH, WHERE I FIRST ENLISTED IN THE 10th CAVALRY.



I CONDUCTED MYSELF WELL AGAINST THE RENEGADE INDIANS OF KANSAS AND COLORADO, WAS MENTIONED IN LETTERS FOUR TIMES AND ROSE TO THE RANK OF SERGEANT.

LATER, AS I WILL TELL, I WAS OBLIGED TO CHANGE MY NAME TO HENRY RICHARD SIMMONS, BUT BACK THEN I WAS FRANCIS CHARLES PARKER, THE SON OF COTTON SLAVES, AN OFFICER OF THE UNITED STATES CAVALRY AND THE EQUAL OF ANY MAN...

...OR SO I THOUGHT, UNTIL WE WERE POSTED TO FORT CONCHO, NEAR THE TOWN OF SAN ANGELO IN TEXAS.

I'VE HEARD THAT GENERAL SHERIDAN ONCE SAID "IF I OWNED HELL AND TEXAS, I WOULD RENT OUT TEXAS, AND LIVE IN HELL." I WOULD NOT ARGUE AGAINST HIM...

DON'T THEY LOOK QUITE CHARMING IN THEIR UNIFORMS, CLINGING TO THEIR HORSES LIKE MONKEYS?

A JIGABOO ON A HORSE IS NOT CHARMING. I CALL IT A GODDAMNED OFFENSE AGAINST NATURE.

HEY, SOLDIER BOY!

RELATIONS WITH THE CITIZENS OF SAN ANGELO WERE NEVER EASY, BUT THEY CAME TO A HEAD A FEW MONTHS LATER, WHEN ONE OF OURS WAS SHOT DOWN IN COLD BLOOD AS HE RODE BY BILL POWELL'S SALOON.

BLAM!

THERE NOW, I BELIEVE HE HAS LEARNED HIS PLACE.





WHEN THE MEN HEARD OF THE MURDER AND THAT THE CRIMINAL WAS WALKING FREE AND BOASTING OF IT, THERE WAS NO HOLDING THEM.

I RODE ALONG WITH THEM IN THE VAIN HOPE THAT A COOL HEAD MIGHT AVERT A DISASTER.

SOME OF THE MEN HAD PUT TOGETHER A DECLARATION WHICH WAS DULY DELIVERED TO AN ATTENTIVE AUDIENCE AT THE SALOON.

WE, THE SOLDIERS OF THE U.S. ARMY, DO HEREBY WARN COW-BOYS AND OTHERS OF SAN ANGELO AND VICINITY, TO RECOGNIZE OUR RIGHT OF WAY, AS JUST AND PEACEABLE MEN. IF WE DO NOT RECEIVE JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY, WHICH WE MUST HAVE, SOME ONE MUST SUFFER. IF NOT THE GUILTY, THE INNOCENT.



IT HAS GONE TOO FAR. WE DEMAND JUSTICE OR DEATH!

HAPPY TO OBLIGE!



BLAM!

SO, IT TRANSPIRED THAT IT WAS MY COOL HEAD AND STEADY HAND THAT DREW FIRST BLOOD.





THEN ALL HELL  
LET LOOSE, I'VE  
HEARD MANY  
VERSIONS OF  
WHAT HAPPENED  
THERE. SOME SAY  
A DOZEN OR  
MORE LAY DEAD  
AT THE END  
OF IT, SOME THAT  
THERE WERE  
NONE SLAIN AT  
ALL. I CAN'T  
VOUCH FOR THE  
ACCURACY OF  
ANY ACCOUNT.



ALL I KNOW FOR SURE IS  
THAT ONCE OUT OF SAN ANGELO  
I CONSIDERED MYSELF A  
FUGITIVE. I STOPPED ONLY TO  
GATHER A FEW POSSESSIONS  
FROM MY BILLET AT FORT  
CONCHO AND THEN I KEPT  
RIDING LIKE THE DEVIL WAS AT  
MY BACK, NORTH TOWARDS  
COLORADO SPRINGS...



...TO ALMA,  
MY ALMA...



I LOST COUNT OF THE DAYS I JOURNEYED, DEPENDING ON THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS TO FEED ME.

I KNEW I COULD NOT RIDE INTO COLORADO SPRINGS, WHERE THE LAW WOULD BE WAITING FOR ME. SO I HEADED INTO THE HILLS ABOVE THE CITY WITH THE IDEA THAT I WOULD SOMEHOW SEND WORD TO ALMA.

A BLIZZARD DESCENDED ON ME AND I THINK I WOULD HAVE GIVEN MYSELF TO THE STORM'S ICY EMBRACE, IF IT WERE NOT FOR MY FIANCEE'S SMILING FACE, EVER BEFORE ME.


THEN I SAW HIM. HE APPEARED FROM NOWHERE, AS IF HE WAS CONJURED RIGHT OUT OF THE SNOW...

...DRESSED ALL IN WHITE ON A HORSE AS BLACK AS DEATH.

EVEN AT THAT DISTANCE, I COULD FEEL HIS EYES UPON ME.


AND THEN, WITHOUT A SIGN, HE TURNED AND RODE AWAY. I FIGURED THAT, COATLESS AS HE WAS, THERE MUST BE SHELTER NEARBY. SO I FOLLOWED HIM.






A lone rider on a horse is seen from behind, standing in a snowy, mountainous landscape. In the distance, a small cabin with a warm light emanating from its windows sits atop a rocky ridge. The scene is atmospheric, with falling snow and dark, silhouetted trees in the foreground.

I LOST SIGHT OF THE RIDER BUT AFTER A SHORT WHILE I CAME UPON THE HEART-WARMING SIGHT OF A CABIN.



A close-up of the rider from behind, looking into the open doorway of the cabin. The interior is brightly lit, contrasting with the cold, dark exterior. The rider's horse is partially visible on the right.

THE LIGHT SPILLING FROM THE OPEN DOOR WAS WELCOME ENOUGH.



A woman in a plaid shirt is lying on the floor, holding a handgun. She has a determined expression. In the background, a man lies motionless on the floor, and a figure is seen running away through a doorway. The room is filled with blood and the scene is chaotic.

WITHIN THE CABIN WAS A SIGHT THAT TURNED MY BLOOD COLDER THAN THE CHILL MOUNTAIN WINDS. FOUR CHILDREN LAY DEAD WITH A WOMAN I TOOK TO BE THEIR MOTHER, STILL CLUTCHING THE SHOTGUN, WITH WHICH SHE HAD VAINLY SOUGHT TO PROTECT THEM.

THE BLOOD ON THE SNOW, LESS SO...



I NEVER HEARD THE MARSHAL AND HIS DEPUTIES COMING UP ON ME. THAT MOST LIKELY SAVED ME. IF I HAD DRAWN MY WEAPON THEY WOULD HAVE HAD THEIR EXCUSE TO SHOOT ME ON THE SPOT.

JESUS HOLY CHRIST! LOOKIT THIS MESS!

STEP AWAY FROM HER, AND KEEP YOUR HANDS HIGH.

LOOKS LIKE WE GOT US ONE OF THEM NEGRO SOLDIERS.

YOU ROBBIN' THE DEAD THERE, BOY?

I DIDN'T DO THIS.

I KNOW WHO DID THIS.

GUESS I KNOW WHO YOU ARE TOO, MR. PARKER. WE HAVE THE TELEGRAPH HERE. HEARD NEWS OF THAT TROUBLE DOWN IN SAN ANGELO.

I'LL HOLD YOU IN THE TOWN JAIL UNTIL THIS DAMNED SNOW ABATES.

YOU BEHAVE AND I'LL SEE YOU SAFE DOWN TO COLORADO SPRINGS SOON AS THE ROADS ARE OPEN. RECKON THE ARMY WILL SEE TO YOU THEN.

WELCOME TO BANE  
POPULATION 259

I HEAR THE MILITARY PREFERS A FIRING SQUAD TO A ROPE NECKTIE. GUESS THAT'S AS CIVILIZED AN END AS ANY MAN COULD HOPE FOR.

WELL, I WAS HOPING TO DIE IN MY BED WITH MY WIFE HOLDING MY HAND AND A DOZEN GRANDCHILDREN SITTING BY, SAYING PRAYERS FOR ME.

Heh.





AS WE ARRIVED  
IN TOWN, I SAW HIM  
ONCE MORE...



...THE MAN IN WHITE.



WHO IS  
THAT MAN,  
MARSHAL?

YOU'RE  
SNOW-BLIND  
OR  
DREAMING,  
SON.



THERE'S  
NO ONE UP  
THERE.



DID YOU  
**SEE**  
THEM?

DID YOU  
SEE THE SORRY  
BLOODY  
**MORTALITY**  
OF IT?

MR. PARKER,  
MAKE THE  
ACQUAINTANCE OF  
JEREMY WINSTON,  
MORE COMMONLY  
REFERRED TO  
HEREABOUTS AS  
OL' JOB.

IT'S HIS FAMILY  
THAT WAS  
MASSACRED.





HE KILLED  
HIS OWN  
FAMILY?

MY  
MONEY'S  
ON IT.

I'LL RIP  
THE LIPS OFF  
YOUR LYING  
MOUTH YOU SON  
OF A SYPHILITIC  
WHORE!



IT WAS  
KEMPER'S  
MEN AND  
YOU *KNOW*  
IT!

SET THAT  
*MURDERING*  
JACKAL IN FRONT  
OF ME WITHOUT  
THESE BARS TO  
HOLD ME, AND  
I'LL *PERSUADE*  
THE TRUTH  
FROM HIM.



YOU'LL  
HAVE YOUR  
DAY IN  
COURT.

I CREDIT  
YOU WITH MORE  
BRAINS THAN THAT,  
MARSHAL. KEMPER  
WILL NEVER ALLOW  
ME TO SPEAK  
AGAINST HIM IN  
A COURT OF  
LAW.



SILAS, YOU  
WATCH THESE  
TWO. NO VISITORS  
SET FOOT IN THIS  
OFFICE UNTIL I  
RETURN.

I'LL BE  
SEEING TO  
THE  
RETRIEVAL  
OF THE  
BODIES.

YOU TREAT  
THEM RIGHT  
MARSHAL, OR  
I'LL SWING  
FOR YOU.



I'LL  
GIVE THEM  
ALL DUE  
RESPECT.  
YOU KNOW  
THAT.



DON'T THINK  
I'LL SPARE YOU,  
MARSHAL. I'LL VISIT  
MY VENGEANCE ON  
EVERY LAST SOUL  
WHO DRAWS  
BREATH IN THIS  
GODFORSAKEN  
HELLHOLE.





BEST GET USED TO OL' JOB'S SERMONIZING. HE USED TO BE A PREACHER BEFORE HE WENT NATIVE AND SET UP HOUSE WITH THAT INDIAN SQUAW.

LORD KNOWS WHAT GOD HE WORSHIPS NOW.



MY WIFE HAS A NAME.

AND I'LL GIVE MY ALLEGIANCE TO ANY GOD OR DEVIL WHO WILL GRANT ME A SINGLE DAY OF FREEDOM TO PAY BACK THE BLOOD OF MY WIFE AND CHILDREN.

WILL YOU HOBBLE YOUR LIP NOW AND GIVE ME SOME PEACE?



WHAT'S SHE CALLED?

WHUT?

YOUR WIFE. WHAT'S HER NAME?



KIMI.



KIMI. THAT'S A GOOD NAME.

IT MEANS SECRET.

SHE KEPT HER OWN COUNSEL MOSTLY.

SHE WAS A GOOD WOMAN.



WHAT HAPPENED UP THERE? WHO IS THIS KEMPER FELLOW?



THE WIND KEENED AND WAILED OUTSIDE THE DOOR, PROVIDING MOURNFUL ACCOMPANIMENT AS OL' JOB RECOUNTED HIS WOEFUL TALE.





I LIVED PEACEABLY ENOUGH ON MY OWN LAND. THESE TWO DECADES PAST I'VE TRAPPED FUR AND TRADED HONESTLY WITH THE PEOPLE OF BANE.



"THEN SILVER WAS STRUCK AND THE VERMIN SWARMED IN. SELF-PROCLAIMED 'BUSINESSMEN' LIKE ED KEMPER AND HIS GANG OF THIEVES. HE'S BOUGHT UP MOST OF THE LAND HEREABOUTS. I STOOD AGAINST HIM. I KNOW THERE'S SILVER ON MY LAND BUT I WANT NONE OF IT."



THERE'S NO PRICE WILL BUY MY LAND OR MY HOME.



"I WASN'T THERE WHEN HIS MEN RETURNED. MY CONJECTURE IS THAT THEY THOUGHT TO INTIMIDATE MY DEAR WIFE."

"THEY DIDN'T KNOW KIMI. SHE DON'T COTTON MUCH TO INTIMIDATION."



THEY MURDERED THEM ALL. AND NOT ONE MAN IN THIS TOWN WOULD LIFT A FINGER AGAINST THE GUILTY PARTY.

SO I WENT AFTER HIM MYSELF. I PUT DOWN TWO OF HIS LACKEYS BEFORE I WAS SUBDUED.

IT'S THEIR BLOOD YOU SEE ON ME. I HAVE NO SHAME FOR IT.

I'D SPILL THE BLOOD OF EVERY BASTARD IN THIS TOWN AND BATHE IN IT GLADLY.



THAT COULD BE ARRANGED.



ONCE AGAIN THE MAN  
IN WHITE HAD APPEARED  
WITH NO FOREWARNING.

THE DEPUTY WAS  
DEAD TO THE WORLD,  
ALTHOUGH HE HAD NOT  
TAKEN MORE THAN A  
GLASS OF WHISKEY.

GENTLEMEN,  
WHAT WOULD  
YOU DO TO LEAVE  
THIS PLACE?  
WHAT WOULD  
YOU GIVE?

WHAT  
PRICE ARE  
YOU  
ASKING?

THE ONLY THING  
EITHER OF YOU HAS  
LEFT TO BARTER.

YOUR  
SOUL.

HA!  
I IMAGINED  
THE DEVIL WITH  
A RUDDIER  
COMPLEXION.

DO  
YOU THINK  
THE DEVIL  
HAS THE  
INCLINATION  
OR THE TIME  
TO BARTER  
FOR A SINGLE  
HUMAN  
SOUL?

HE'LL  
HAVE  
IT WHEN  
THE TIME  
COMES  
WHETHER  
YOU WILL  
IT OR  
NOT.

THE ONE I  
REPRESENT IS  
THE DEMON  
MALEBOLGIA.









YOU INTRIGUE ME. I'VE MADE THIS OFFER MANY TIMES. I HAVE NEVER BEEN REFUSED BECAUSE I KNOW IN ADVANCE THE MAN I SEEK.

THIS TIME...



...THIS TIME, I'M NOT CERTAIN. I'M DRAWN TO BOTH OF YOU.

I MUST BE SURE THAT I MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE.

THE HELL WITH YOUR PHILOSOPHIES!

HE HAS REFUSED YOUR OFFER. NOW WILL YOU LET ME FREE?



NO. I THINK NOT. YOU DOUBT ME.

IN ORDER TO MAKE THIS PACT, YOU MUST BELIEVE...



YOU WERE RIGHT, JOB. KEMPER WILL NOT LET YOU LIVE TO STAND TRIAL.

WHEN YOU ARE LOOKING DEATH IN THE FACE YOU WILL BELIEVE.

THEN I'LL ASK AGAIN FOR THE FINAL TIME. ONE OF YOU WILL ACCEPT.

AND WHEN WILL THAT BE?



Bam!  
BAM!  
BAM!

I DO BELIEVE THAT'S DEATH KNOCKING AT THE DOOR, RIGHT NOW.



KERASSH!

UNLOCK  
THOSE CELLS  
NOW SILAS. THOSE  
SKUNKS AIN'T  
WORTH TAKING A  
BULLET FOR.

THEY DON'T  
SEE HIM. HE'S  
STANDING THERE AS  
PLAIN AS A BOIL ON A  
WHORE'S BACKSIDE  
AND THEY DON'T  
SEE HIM.

IN DUE  
REGARD FOR  
NATURAL JUSTICE,  
THE VIGILANCE  
COMMITTEE OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF BANE,  
COLORADO HAS DULY  
CONCLUDED THAT IN  
THE CASE OF THE  
NOTORIOUS MURDERS  
OF ARTHUR SHAW  
AND MICHAEL REILLY  
BY THIS HERE  
MISCREANT...

...AND THE  
UNHOLY  
MASSACRE OF  
HIS OWN KITH  
AN' KIN, NAMELY  
HIS SQUAW  
WHORE AND  
FIVE BASTARD  
CHILDREN...

...THE  
PRISONER  
KNOWN AS  
OL' JOB IS  
HEREBY  
CONDEMNED  
TO HANG BY  
HIS FILTHY  
NECK UNTIL  
DEAD...

...AND  
THE  
NIGGER  
WITH  
HIM.





WE SHOULD  
USE LONGER  
ROPES SO THE  
DROP SNAPS THEIR  
NECKS.

MR. KEMPER  
WANTS THE SHORT  
ROPE. THAT CROWD  
DOWN THERE HAS  
BRAVED THE COLD, THE  
LEAST WE CAN DO IS  
PUT ON A SHOW  
FOR THEM.

KEEP  
THE SHORT ROPES  
AND LET THEM KICK  
THEIR HEELS FOR A  
WHILE.



HE'S THERE!  
NOW WE'LL SEE  
IF HIS OFFER  
WAS GOOD.



I'LL TAKE  
YOUR OFFER  
DEMON!



WHAT  
THE HELL IS  
HE RAVING  
ABOUT?

HE'S  
A LOON.  
MR. KEMPER.  
ALWAYS  
WAS.



I'LL  
SEE YOU IN  
HELL! EVERY  
LAST ONE OF  
YOU!





ALMA.

*WHAT HAPPENED AFTER, I REMEMBER AS ONE LONG NIGHTMARE. IT BEGAN AS THE ROPE BIT INTO MY NECK AND MY VISION TURNED RED.*

*ABOVE THE RINGING IN MY EARS, I HEARD THE VOICE OF THE MARSHAL.*



CUT  
THOSE MEN  
DOWN!

I'LL  
HAVE NO  
LYNCHING  
IN MY  
TOWN.

GODDAMMIT! I  
SHOULD'A GONE FOR  
THE LONG DROP.

SHALL  
I SHOOT  
HIM?

BETWEEN  
THE EYES IF YOU  
PLEASE, MISTER  
SHAW.

THE  
OTHER  
ONE  
TOO?

I DON'T GIVE  
A DAMN ABOUT  
THE OTHER.

JUST  
KILL ME THAT  
CURSED  
BIBLE  
THUMPER!





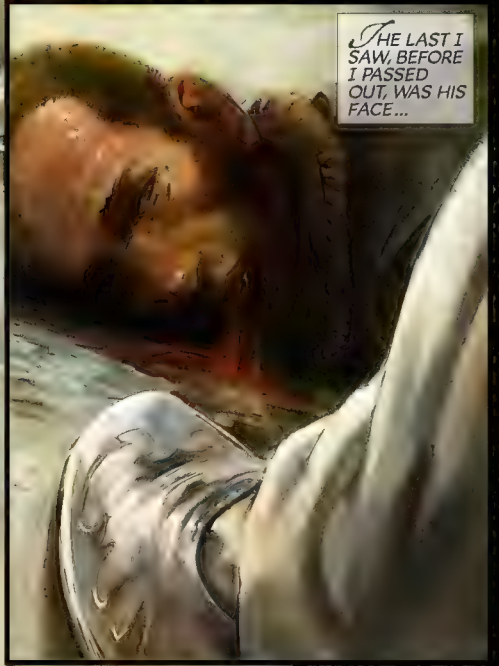
THE MAN IN WHITE TOUCHED  
THE SHOOTER'S ARM. NO  
MORE THAN THAT. A TOUCH...



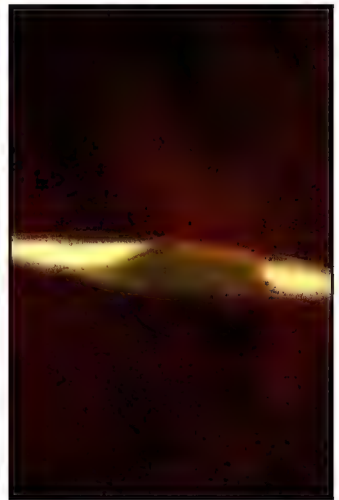
...AND MY LIFE WAS SPARED.



THE LAST I  
SAW, BEFORE  
I PASSED  
OUT, WAS HIS  
FACE...



...HIS  
DAMNED  
FACE.





HOW  
IS HE?

HE'LL  
LIVE.

NO!  
THIS ISN'T  
RIGHT.

DON'T  
TRY TO  
SPEAK. YOU'VE  
BEEN DAMN' NEAR  
CHOKED TO  
DEATH.

JUST  
REST  
EASY.

I TURNED  
HIM DOWN.  
IT WAS JOB  
MADE THE DEAL.  
IT WAS JOB  
WHO SHOULD  
HAVE LIVED.

JOB IS LAID  
UP ON A BOARD IN  
MY OFFICE.

FOR GOOD  
OR ILL THE OLD  
BASTARD HAS  
BREATHED HIS  
LAST...

"...SO UNLESS JESUS  
CHRIST HIMSELF  
PASSES BY TO RAISE  
HIM, WE'LL SEE NO  
MORE OF OL' JOB."











HOW DOES IT FEEL?

DOES YOUR NEW FLESH SUIT YOU?

IT FEELS LIKE DEAD MEAT.



IT'S DONE THEN?

NO TURNING BACK?

A DEAL IS A DEAL. YOU BELONG TO MALEBOLGIA NOW.

HERE. TAKE A LOOK IN THIS GLASS.



YOU BEAR THE MARK OF YOUR MASTER.

AN AWFUL SIGHT ISN'T IT?

IT SUITS ME FINE.

IT'S THE LAST SIGHT THOSE SONS OF BITCHES WILL EVER SEE.



I'VE BROUGHT YOUR CLOTHES AND YOUR WEAPONS.

WITH THE RECENT DEATHS ACCOUNTED FOR, THE POPULATION OF BANE STANDS AT TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SEVEN.

YOU THINK TWENTY-FOUR HOURS WILL BE ENOUGH?



START THE CLOCK, FRIEND...





...LET THE  
KILLING  
COMMENCE!

*To Be Continued...*







Tyrant  
Lizard  
King

EMPIRE